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PECULIARITIES OF RENDERING NAMES OF TOPONYMIC UNITS

Abstract: The transfer of toponymic units has always been a rather controversial issue, both in theory and in the practice of translation. Until now, there is no single approach to the transfer. Thus, this article describes the features of the transfer of toponymic units from Russian to English languages and includes some recommendations about the methodology.

Key words: toponymic units, toponymy, transliteration, transcription, rendering, translation.

Nowadays we can be everywhere in the world, we can find any location with the help of our phones. But what would we do if the names of streets, bays, churches or squares would sound completely different than those we are used to hearing in our everyday life? This is what foreigners sometimes face while visiting our country. It makes their ability to know their ways around too difficult. That is why we need to figure out how to render such complicated language units into Russian accurately.

According to E.L. Berezovich, toponymy is «a scientific discipline, which studies geographical names, their origin, development, current state, semantic significance, their spelling and pronunciation» [1].

Toponyms are classified by five different principles. The first one is their classification by the type of designated geographical objects (e.g. hydronyms, oronyms). The second one is classifying by language (e.g. Russian, Tatar names). The third one is classifying by structure (simple, derivative, complex, compound). The fourth one deals with historical aspect (e.g. Chinese, Slavic). And the fifth one is classifying by area (microtoponyms and macrotoponyms). The former are individual names of small geographical objects and characteristic features of the relief and landscape. They are formed on the basis of the language or dialect of the people or nationality. Microtoponyms are very mobile and changeable but,

as a rule, their usage is limited by the geographic area of distribution of a dialect or language. Macrotoponyms are names of large natural or man-made geographical and socio-administrative units. The main features of this group are standardization and stability, as well as breadth of use [4].

There are three main generally accepted ways for rendering toponyms, as well as other proper names: transliteration, transcription and tracing [2].

Transliteration is needed when languages use various graphic systems (for example, English, Russian, Greek, Armenian, Georgian) but the letters (or graphic units) of these languages can be put in some kind of correspondence with each other, and thus there may be an interlingual transfer of proper names. For example, the Latin alphabet and the Cyrillic alphabet have a common basis; most letters of these two alphabets can be matched with each other in view of the sounds they regularly designate [2]. As for the mistakes, let us take an example - *the Leningrad Oblast*'. It will be appropriate to write the *Leningrad Region*, because people who are not familiar with our realities will not understand the meaning of the word «oblast», but they will be able to navigate with the word «region». There is the same problem with «*Nikolskoe kladbishe*» and «*Arsenalnaya Naberezhnaya*». For the ease of navigation they should be rendered into English as «*St. Nicholas Cemetery*» and «*Arsenal'naya quay*».

There is also a mixed way – transliteration and transcription [2]. For example, let us take a toponym *Ploshchad Iskusstv*. Here we see that one part is translated with the help of transcription and another with transliteration. The preferred variant here is *Arts Square*, because it can show the tourist what kind of object it is.

As for tracing, there are some established ways. «*Black Sea*», «*White Sea*», «*Baltic Sea*», and, for example, «*Russia's Northwestern region*» (or «*district*») (Северо-Западный регион). There are three elements and «*Russia's*» is traditional translation, and two other elements are tracing. Tracing is more common in the translation of buildings, institutions, organizations. So we have «*Constitutional Court*» (Конституционный суд), it is either the name of organization and the building where it is placed. «*St. Petersburg Legislative Assembly*» (Заседание Законодательного собрания) also means the building and the authority. The same situation we have with «*The State Russian Museum*» (Государственный Русский музей). In these cases, tracing is appropriate because rendering by transcription or transliteration would confuse foreign

tourists. But there is one interesting case when there are two possible variants of translation, for example: (Дворцовая площадь) «*Palace Square*» and «*Dvortsovaya Ploshchad*». This happened because the translators involved decided that transliterated names would be easier for foreigners if they needed to ask for direction. But, on the other hand, there is an established English name – *the Palace Square*, and it will be indicated along with the transliteration – *Dvortsovaya Ploshchad*.

When rendering toponymic objects, you should also consider what the translation is for – for street orientation or for an information medium. The general principle is the division of objects into key and non-key ones. Key objects are objects having infrastructural or historical and cultural significance for tourists. As for non-key objects, they include all the rest. That is, the names of key objects are fully translated into English, and non-key ones - by transliteration [2]. For example: the key object is *Opera and Ballet Theatre* (Оперный театр) and the non-key one is *Avtokolonna* (автобусная остановка «Автоколонна»).

When rendering, there are some general trends that should be used.

- The proper name and the name of the toponymic object are transliterated thus allowing to identify the name. The classifier is written in accordance with the Russian tradition – with a lowercase letter. So, we have: проспект – *prospekt*, переулок – *pereulok*, проезд – *proezd*, улица – *ulitsa*, линия – *liniya*, набережная – *naberezhnaya*, площадь – *ploshchad*, бульвар – *boulevard* [3]. For example – «*Nevskiy prospect*». The recommended address format is: house + [building / letter] + street. All elements are transliterated for the ease of identification: *19, Lenina ulitsa*.

- Gardens, parks and squares. The proper name and the name of the toponymic object are transliterated; in brackets a translation should be given. Transliteration is necessary to determine the location of an object. So, we have: сад – *garden*, парк – *park*, сквер – *public garden*, поле – *field* [3]. For example: *Марсово поле* – *Marsovo pole* (*Mars Field*).

- Rivers, lakes, canals, ponds, bridges. The general rule is that the proper name is transliterated, and the name of the toponymic object is translated. So, we have: река – *river*, озеро – *lake*, канал – *canal*, пруд – *pond*, мост – *bridge* [3]. For example: *Река Нева* – *the Neva River*.

- Institutions and organizations, cultural institutions, historical sites, museums, sports infrastructure facilities. The general rule is that all names are translated. So, we have: почта/отделение почтовой связи –

Post Office, полиция – Police, музей – Museum, музей-квартира – Memorial Apartment, университет – University и т.д [3]. For example: *Русский музей – Russian Museum*. Also it is recommended to avoid long names of institutions, because it complicates perception and does not solve the main task – to direct the tourist to the desired facility. The index should provide visualization of information in the shortest possible way, which would help the tourist to find the desired object.

- Information about the historical belonging of the object to someone. The general rule is that the proper name is transliterated, while in the English version it is necessary to omit the initials [3]. For example: *Музей-квартира М.А.Булгакова – Bulgakov Memorial Apartment*.

- Names of companies, organizations that are not nominal names are, as a rule, fully transliterated. For example: *Водоканал – Vodokanal*.

- Names of companies, organizations that are nominal names are, as a rule, fully transliterated and the translation should be given in the brackets. The name should be placed in inverted commas. For example: *Подростково-молодежный клуб Дружба – «Druzhba» («Friendship») Club for Teenagers and Young People*.

- Transfer of names of religious buildings. The general rule is that they are fully transliterated and translated, the translation being given in brackets. Transliteration is necessary to determine the location of an object. So we have: *церковь – church, храм – church, собор – cathedral, часовня – chapel* [3]. For example: *Исаакиевский собор – Isaakievskiy sobor (St. Isaac's Cathedral)*.

- Transfer of names of monuments. The general rule is that «*памятник чему/кому-либо*» is rendered as «*Monument to*». If the monument is dedicated to an event or a group of people, the title is translated. For example: *Монумент героическим защитникам Ленинграда – Monument to the Heroic Defenders of Leningrad*.

- Objects of transport infrastructure. The general rule is that the names of the object types are translated. Proper names, station names are fully transliterated. For example: *станция метро «Динамо» – Dinamo Metro Station*.

In conclusion, we would like to say that English does not lose its position as an international language, and with a large flow of tourists in our country, we must be ready to render toponymic units correctly in order to help people find their ways in our country without any problems. But for the translation to be good we need to study the features of toponymy

and try to find universals that will be known all over the world and which translators will use.

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ОСОБЕННОСТИ ПЕРЕВОДА ТОПОНИМИЧЕСКИХ ЕДИНИЦ

Аннотация: Передача топонимических единиц всегда являлась довольно спорным вопросом, как в теории, так и в практике перевода. До сих пор не существует единого подхода к передаче этого слоя лексики. В данной статье описываются особенности передачи топонимических единиц с русского на английский язык и даются некоторые рекомендации по методике этой передачи.

Ключевые слова: топонимические единицы, топонимика, транслитерация, транскрипция, передача, перевод.

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